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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

ATTORNEY'S DOCKET NUMBER

TRANSMITTAL LETTER TO THE UNITED STATES
DESIGNATED/ELECTED OFFICE (DO/EO/US)
CONCERNING A FILING UNDER 35 U.S.C. 371

2034

U.S. APPLICATION NO. (IF KNOWN, SEE 37 CFR

10/069644

INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION NO.
PCT/DE 00/02833INTERNATIONAL FILING DATE
AUGUST 18, 2000PRIORITY DATE CLAIMED
AUGUST 21, 1999

TITLE OF INVENTION

METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR POST-TREATMENT OF EXHAUST GAS PRODUCED BY AN INTERNAL
COMBUSTION ENGINE

APPLICANT(S) FOR DO/EO/US

Nikolaus BENNINGER, Horst HARNDORF

Applicant herewith submits to the United States Designated/Elected Office (DO/EO/US) the following items and other information:

1. ☒ This is a **FIRST** submission of items concerning a filing under 35 U.S.C. 371.
2. ☐ This is a **SECOND** or **SUBSEQUENT** submission of items concerning a filing under 35 U.S.C. 371.
3. ☒ This is an express request to begin national examination procedures (35 U.S.C. 371(f)) at any time rather than delay examination until the expiration of the applicable time limit set in 35 U.S.C. 371(b) and PCT Articles 22 and 39(1).
4. ☒ A proper Demand for International Preliminary Examination was made by the 19th month from the earliest claimed priority date.
5. ☒ A copy of the International Application as filed (35 U.S.C. 371 (c) (2))
 - a. ☐ is transmitted herewith (required only if not transmitted by the International Bureau).
 - b. ☒ has been transmitted by the International Bureau.
 - c. ☐ is not required, as the application was filed in the United States Receiving Office (RO/US).
6. ☒ A translation of the International Application into English (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(2)).
7. ☐ A copy of the International Search Report (PCT/ISA/210).
8. ☐ Amendments to the claims of the International Application under PCT Article 19 (35 U.S.C. 371 (c)(3))
 - a. ☐ are transmitted herewith (required only if not transmitted by the International Bureau).
 - b. ☐ have been transmitted by the International Bureau.
 - c. ☐ have not been made; however, the time limit for making such amendments has NOT expired.
 - d. ☐ have not been made and will not be made.
9. ☐ A translation of the amendments to the claims under PCT Article 19 (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(3)).
10. ☒ An oath or declaration of the inventor(s) (35 U.S.C. 371 (c)(4)).
11. ☐ A copy of the International Preliminary Examination Report (PCT/IPEA/409).
12. ☐ A translation of the annexes to the International Preliminary Examination Report under PCT Article 36 (35 U.S.C. 371 (c)(5)).

Items 13 to 18 below concern document(s) or information included:

13. ☒ An Information Disclosure Statement under 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98.
14. ☐ An assignment document for recording. A separate cover sheet in compliance with 37 CFR 3.28 and 3.31 is included.
15. ☒ A **FIRST** preliminary amendment.
A **SECOND** or **SUBSEQUENT** preliminary amendment.
16. ☐ A substitute specification.
17. ☐ A change of power of attorney and/or address letter.
18. ☒ Certificate of Mailing by Express Mail
19. ☐ Other items or information:

ET 706689521US

U.S. APPLICATION NO. (IF KNOWN, SEE 37 CFR 1.492(a)(1) - (5)) : 10/069644	INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION NO. PCT/DE 00/02833	ATTORNEY'S DOCKET NUMBER 2034
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20. The following fees are submitted:

BASIC NATIONAL FEE (37 CFR 1.492 (a) (1) - (5)) :

- ☐ Search Report has been prepared by the EPO or JPO **\$930.00**
- ☐ International preliminary examination fee paid to USPTO (37 CFR 1.482) **\$720.00**
- ☐ No international preliminary examination fee paid to USPTO (37 CFR 1.482) but international search fee paid to USPTO (37 CFR 1.445(a)(2)) **\$790.00**
- ☒ Neither international preliminary examination fee (37 CFR 1.482) nor international search fee (37 CFR 1.445(a)(2)) paid to USPTO **\$1,070.00**
- ☐ International preliminary examination fee paid to USPTO (37 CFR 1.482) and all claims satisfied provisions of PCT Article 33(2)-(4) **\$98.00**

ENTER APPROPRIATE BASIC FEE AMOUNT =**\$890.00**

Surcharge of **\$130.00** for furnishing the oath or declaration later than ☐ 20 ☐ 30 months from the earliest claimed priority date (37 CFR 1.492 (e)).

\$0.00

CLAIMS	NUMBER FILED	NUMBER EXTRA	RATE
Total claims	15 - 20 =	0	x \$18.00
Independent claims	2 - 3 =	0	x \$80.00

\$0.00**\$0.00**Multiple Dependent Claims (check if applicable). ☐**\$0.00****TOTAL OF ABOVE CALCULATIONS =****\$890.00**

Reduction of 1/2 for filing by small entity, if applicable. Verified Small Entity Statement must also be filed (Note 37 CFR 1.9, 1.27, 1.28) (check if applicable). ☐

\$0.00**SUBTOTAL =****\$890.00**

Processing fee of **\$130.00** for furnishing the English translation later than ☐ 20 ☐ 30 months from the earliest claimed priority date (37 CFR 1.492 (f)).

\$0.00**TOTAL NATIONAL FEE =****\$890.00**

Fee for recording the enclosed assignment (37 CFR 1.21(h)). The assignment must be accompanied by an appropriate cover sheet (37 CFR 3.28, 3.31) (check if applicable). ☐

\$0.00**TOTAL FEES ENCLOSED =****\$890.00**

Amount to be:

refunded \$

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- ☐ A check in the amount of _____ to cover the above fees is enclosed.
- ☒ Please charge my Deposit Account No. **19-4675** in the amount of **\$890.00** to cover the above fees.
A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.
- ☒ The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees which may be required, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. **19-4675** A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

NOTE: Where an appropriate time limit under 37 CFR 1.494 or 1.495 has not been met, a petition to revive (37 CFR 1.137(a) or (b)) must be filed and granted to restore the application to pending status.

SEND ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO:

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SIGNATURE

MICHAEL J. STRIKER

NAME

27233

REGISTRATION NUMBER

FEBRUARY 20, 2002

DATE

UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Examiner: Group: Attorney Docket # 2034

Applicant(s) : BENNINGER, N., ET AL

Serial No. :

Filed :

For : METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR POST-
TREATMENT OF EXHAUST GAS PRODUCED BY AN
INTERNAL COMBUSTION ENGINE

SIMULTANEOUS AMENDMENT

February 19, 2002

Honorable Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks
Washington, D.C. 20231

S I R S:

Simultaneously with filing of the above identified application
please amend the same as follows:

In the Claims:

Cancel all claims without prejudice.

Substitute the claims attached hereto.

REMARKS:


This Amendment is submitted simultaneously with filing of the above identified
application.

With the present Amendment applicant has amended the claims so as to eliminate
their multiple dependency.

2002 FEB 19 14 36 50

Consideration and allowance of the present application is most respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



Michael J. Striker
Attorney for Applicant(s)
Reg. No. 27233

20250-11969007

What is claimed is:

1. A method for the post-treatment of exhaust gas produced by an internal combustion engine (1), particularly in a motor vehicle, wherein
 - a hydrolysis unit (10) connected to a water tank (19) is provided to obtain hydrogen, and
 - a quantity of hydrogen depending on a demand for hydrogen occurring at certain operating states and/or functions of the catalytic converter delivered to the untreated exhaust gas (A) and/or the exhaust gas treated by an oxidation catalytic converter is metered.
2. The method according to Claim 1, wherein the quantity of hydrogen required in each case is produced on demand in the hydrolysis unit (10) and made available directly for metering.
3. The method according to Claim 1, wherein a hydrogen tank (11) is provided that stores a certain quantity of the hydrogen produced by the hydrolysis unit (10).
4. The method according to Claim 3, wherein the quantity of hydrogen in the tank (11) is dimensioned so that it suffices to heat and regenerate an NOx storage catalytic converter (4).
5. The method according to [one of the preceding claims] claim 1, wherein the temperature (T_A) of the untreated exhaust gas (A) and certain operating states of the catalytic converter system (3, 4) are registered.
6. An application of the method according to [one of the Claims 1 through 5] claim 1 to represent regeneration phases in an NOx storage catalytic converter, wherein hydrogen is added to the untreated exhaust gas at certain intervals and in the quantity required in each case.

7. The application according to Claim 6,
wherein, with a diesel engine, the addition of hydrogen to the exhaust gas is activated when hydrocarbon cannot be produced using an internal process.
8. The application according to Claim 6,
wherein, with a gasoline engine, the addition of hydrogen to the exhaust gas is initiated when the engine operating point at the moment does not allow hydrocarbon to be made available using internal processes at a sufficient temperature.
9. The application of the method according to [one of the Claims 1 through 5] claim 1 to restore a sufficient conversion rate after sulphur poisoning at the oxidation stages of an NOx storage catalytic converter (4) or a particle filter (8) by regenerating the oxidation stages of the storage catalytic converter (4) or the particle filter (8) by means of hydrogen reduction.
10. The application according to Claim 9,
wherein regeneration is activated after the decrease in the conversion rate of the NOx storage catalytic converter (4) or the particle filter (8) is registered.
11. The application of the method according to [one of the Claims 1 through 5] claim 1 to raise the exhaust-gas temperature (T_A) in order to guarantee the regeneration conditions are met when a particle filter (8) is employed while the engine operates under low-load conditions and temperature is therefore a crucial factor.
12. An apparatus for the post-treatment of exhaust gas produced by an internal combustion engine (1), particularly in an internal combustion engine, wherein the following are provided: a hydrolysis unit (10) and a metering device (15) connected to it via a hydrogen line (17) for the metered addition of hydrogen to the untreated exhaust gas (A) and/or to the exhaust gas treated using an

oxidation catalytic converter (3), and a control/regulating unit (18) that is functionally connected to the hydrolysis unit (10) and the metering device (15) in order to control or regulate the production of hydrogen in the hydrolysis unit (10) and the metering device (15) as a function of certain operating states of the internal combustion engine (1) and registered parameters of the exhaust-gas system.

13. The apparatus according to Claim 12, wherein the metering device (15) is a metering and shutoff valve.

14. The apparatus according to Claim 12 [or 13], wherein a hydrogen intermediate storage tank (11) is connected downstream of the hydrolysis unit (10) in order to store a certain quantity of hydrogen.

15. The apparatus according to [one of the Claims 12 through 14] claim 12, wherein the control/regulating unit (18) comprises a catalytic converter monitoring function that is functionally connected to an exhaust-gas sensor system (5).

What is claimed is:

1. A method for the post-treatment of exhaust gas produced by an internal combustion engine (1), particularly in a motor vehicle, wherein
 - a hydrolysis unit (10) connected to a water tank (19) is provided to obtain hydrogen, and
 - a quantity of hydrogen depending on a demand for hydrogen occurring at certain operating states and/or functions of the catalytic converter delivered to the untreated exhaust gas (A) and/or the exhaust gas treated by an oxidation catalytic converter is metered.
2. The method according to Claim 1, wherein the quantity of hydrogen required in each case is produced on demand in the hydrolysis unit (10) and made available directly for metering.
3. The method according to Claim 1, wherein a hydrogen tank (11) is provided that stores a certain quantity of the hydrogen produced by the hydrolysis unit (10).
4. The method according to Claim 3, wherein the quantity of hydrogen in the tank (11) is dimensioned so that it suffices to heat and regenerate an NO_x storage catalytic converter (4).
5. The method according to claim 1, wherein the temperature (T_A) of the untreated exhaust gas (A) and certain operating states of the catalytic converter system (3, 4) are registered.
6. An application of the method according to claim 1 to represent regeneration phases in an NO_x storage catalytic converter, wherein hydrogen is added to the untreated exhaust gas at certain intervals and in the quantity required in each case.

7. The application according to Claim 6, wherein, with a diesel engine, the addition of hydrogen to the exhaust gas is activated when hydrocarbon cannot be produced using an internal process.

8. The application according to Claim 6, wherein, with a gasoline engine, the addition of hydrogen to the exhaust gas is initiated when the engine operating point at the moment does not allow hydrocarbon to be made available using internal processes at a sufficient temperature.

9. The application of the method according to claim 1 to restore a sufficient conversion rate after sulphur poisoning at the oxidation stages of an NO_x storage catalytic converter (4) or a particle filter (8) by regenerating the oxidation stages of the storage catalytic converter (4) or the particle filter (8) by means of hydrogen reduction.

10. The application according to Claim 9, wherein regeneration is activated after the decrease in the conversion rate of the NO_x storage catalytic converter (4) or the particle filter (8) is registered.

11. The application of the method according to claim 1 to raise the exhaust-gas temperature (T_A) in order to guarantee the regeneration conditions are met when a particle filter (8) is employed while the engine operates under low-load conditions and temperature is therefore a crucial factor.

12. An apparatus for the post-treatment of exhaust gas produced by an internal combustion engine (1), particularly in an internal combustion engine, wherein the following are provided: a hydrolysis unit (10) and a metering device (15) connected to it via a hydrogen line (17) for the metered addition of hydrogen to the untreated exhaust gas (A) and/or to the exhaust gas treated using an oxidation catalytic converter (3), and a control/regulating unit (18) that is

functionally connected to the hydrolysis unit (10) and the metering device (15) in order to control or regulate the production of hydrogen in the hydrolysis unit (10) and the metering device (15) as a function of certain operating states of the internal combustion engine (1) and registered parameters of the exhaust-gas system.

13. The apparatus according to Claim 12, wherein the metering device (15) is a metering and shutoff valve.

14. The apparatus according to Claim 12, wherein a hydrogen intermediate storage tank (11) is connected downstream of the hydrolysis unit (10) in order to store a certain quantity of hydrogen.

15. The apparatus according to claim 12, wherein the control/regulating unit (18) comprises a catalytic converter monitoring function that is functionally connected to an exhaust-gas sensor system (5).

1 METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR POST-TREATMENT OF EXHAUST GAS
2 PRODUCED BY AN INTERNAL COMBUSTION ENGINE

3
4 Related Art

5
6 The invention is concerned with a method and an apparatus for the post-
7 treatment of exhaust gas, particularly for lean-burn engines in motor vehicles,
8 e.g., direct-injection diesel engines and gasoline engines, and with ensuring the
9 full functioning of NO_x storage catalytic converters in gasoline and diesel engines
10 and particle filters in diesel engines.

11
12 With the oxidation catalytic converter located in the exhaust pipe of a modern
13 gasoline or diesel engine using direct injection, SO_x deposits in the oxidation
14 catalytic converter impair the desired NO₂ formation even to the point of
15 destroying the effectiveness of the catalytic converter system. With NO_x storage
16 catalytic converters, NO₂ is required for the accumulation process. With particle
17 filters that operate using the CRT (continuously regeneration trap) method, NO₂
18 is required for the continuously-occurring oxidation regeneration process of the
19 soot particles. When sulphur contaminates the NO_x storage catalytic converter,
20 the desired NO₂ accumulation is reduced by SO_x deposits in the NO_x adsorber
21 resulting from the sulphur in the fuel until the effectiveness of the system is
22 destroyed. This sulphur compound can be broken down by regenerating the
23 storage catalytic converter by briefly applying elevated exhaust-gas temperatures
24 (a temperature above 650° C is used in gasoline direct-injection engines). The
25 realization of such exhaust-gas temperatures in diesel engines is not considered
26 promising according to the related art. Particle filters that function according to
27 the CRT method mentioned hereinabove require exhaust-gas temperatures that
28 exceed 230° C for the continuously-occurring regeneration process. These
29 conditions cannot always be met with direct-injection diesel engines.
30 Consequently, the filter can become severely overloaded, which can destroy the
31 particle filter.

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1 In the process of regenerating NO_x storage catalytic converters, CO resulting
2 from the hydrocarbon in the fuel must be added, and, at the same time, a rich
3 composition of exhaust gas ($\lambda < 1$) must be produced. With diesel engines,
4 however, it is atypical for the hydrocarbons (HC) required for regeneration to be
5 provided by means of internal processes, due to the principles involved; it is also
6 extremely crucial and associated with considerable reductions in fuel economy.
7 Process-gas flow rates are a great deal higher with the diesel engine than with
8 the gasoline engine. As a result, the temperatures required for regeneration
9 cannot be reached across the entire operating range.

10
11 Likewise, providing a "rich" composition of exhaust gas post-combustion is also a
12 problem with diesel engines, because an oxidation catalytic converter is required
13 to form CO, an exhaust-gas temperature profile is not entirely sufficient, and
14 cycles with rich exhaust gas can only be achieved using a by-pass system.

15 16 Object and Advantages of the Invention

17
18 The object of the invention is to prevent the hereinabove-mentioned difficulties
19 associated with the post-treatment of exhaust gas in modern lean-burn engines,
20 particularly gasoline and diesel engines with direct injection in motor vehicles,
21 and to provide a method and an apparatus for the post-treatment of exhaust gas
22 produced by an internal combustion engine in such a fashion that the exhaust-
23 gas temperature is raised as necessary, and the exhaust-gas quality is improved
24 overall—especially under certain operating conditions of the internal combustion
25 engine—while not making the engine acoustics worse, and while making
26 regeneration of a storage catalytic converter and/or a particle filter possible at
27 regular intervals and/or after sulphur poisoning at the oxidation stages of an NO_x
28 storage catalytic converter and particle filter.

29
30 This object is attained according to the claims.

1 According to an essential aspect, with the method according to the invention for
2 the post-treatment of exhaust gas, a hydrolysis unit for obtaining hydrogen is
3 provided that is connected to a water tank as well as a metering device that is
4 designed to meter the hydrogen delivered to the untreated exhaust gas and/or to
5 the exhaust gas treated by means of an oxidation catalytic converter as a
6 function of a demand for hydrogen occurring at certain operating states and/or
7 catalytic converter functions.

8
9 In an exemplary embodiment of the method, the quantity of hydrogen required in
10 each case can be produced on demand, i.e., discontinuously, in the hydrolysis
11 unit, and can then be made available directly for metering.

12
13 In an alternative exemplary embodiment of the method, a hydrogen tank can be
14 provided that serves to provide intermediate storage for a certain quantity of the
15 hydrogen produced by the hydrolysis unit.

16
17 The size of the hydrogen tank and, therefore, the quantity of the hydrogen stored
18 for the interim, can thereby be designed so that it suffices to heat and regenerate
19 an NO_x storage catalytic converter.

20
21 When the connecting pipes between the metering device and the hydrolysis unit
22 are designed accordingly, the tank can be represented by the inner lumen of the
23 pipeline.

24
25 Preferably, the temperature of the untreated exhaust gas, the λ value and, in
26 addition, certain operating states of the catalytic converter system, are registered
27 to meter the hydrogen to be delivered.

28
29 In the case of a diesel engine, especially with direct injection, the addition of
30 hydrogen to the exhaust gas is activated when hydrocarbon cannot be produced
31 using internal processes.

1 In the case of a gasoline engine, especially one with direct injection, the addition
2 of hydrogen to the exhaust gas is activated when the engine operating point at
3 the moment does not allow hydrocarbon to be provided using internal processes
4 at a sufficient temperature.

5
6 The method according to the invention can be used to restore a sufficient
7 conversion rate after sulphur poisoning at the oxidation stages of an NOx storage
8 catalytic converter or a particle filter by regenerating the oxidation stages of the
9 storage catalytic converter or the particle filter by means of hydrogen reduction.
10 Regeneration by means of adding hydrogen can always be activated when a
11 decrease in the conversion rate of the NOx storage catalytic converter or the
12 particle filter is registered.

13
14 When an internal combustion engine operates under low-load conditions and
15 temperature is therefore a crucial factor, adding hydrogen in accordance with the
16 invention can raise the exhaust-gas temperature in order to guarantee that the
17 regeneration conditions are met during low-load operation of the engine when a
18 particle filter is employed.

19
20 In an apparatus for the post-treatment of exhaust gas produced by an internal
21 combustion engine, especially in a motor vehicle, that attains the object
22 described hereinabove, the following are provided: a hydrolysis unit and a
23 metering device connected to it via a hydrogen line for the metered addition of
24 hydrogen to the untreated exhaust gas and/or to the exhaust gas treated by
25 means of the oxidation catalytic converter, and a control and regulating unit that
26 are functionally connected to the hydrolysis unit and the metering device, in order
27 to control or regulate the production of hydrogen in the hydrolysis unit and the
28 metering device as a function of certain operating states of the internal
29 combustion engine and registered parameters of the exhaust-gas system.

30
31 The metering device is preferably a metering and shutoff valve.

1 The control/regulating unit preferably comprises a catalytic converter monitoring
2 function that is functionally connected to an exhaust-gas sensor system.

3
4 The above-mentioned and further advantageous features of the method
5 according to the invention and the apparatus according to the invention are
6 explained in the subsequent description of preferred exemplary embodiments of
7 the method according to the invention and the apparatus according to the
8 invention, with reference to the drawings.

9 10 Brief Description of the Drawing

11
12 Figure 1 is a schematic drawing, in the form of functional blocks, of a first
13 exemplary embodiment in which the method according to the invention for the
14 post-treatment of exhaust gas is employed in an internal combustion engine
15 outfitted with an NOx storage catalytic converter in the exhaust-gas system.

16
17 Figure 2 is a schematic drawing as well, in the form of a functional block
18 connection diagram, of a second exemplary embodiment, in which the method
19 according to the invention for the post-treatment of exhaust gas is employed in
20 an internal combustion engine outfitted with a CRT particle filter in the exhaust-
21 gas system.

22 23 Detailed Description of the Exemplary Embodiments

24
25 Figure 1 shows a schematic diagram of blocks that illustrate the essential
26 functions and elements of a first exemplary embodiment of the method according
27 to the invention. A hydrolysis unit 10 produces a certain quantity of hydrogen (H₂)
28 on demand from water drawn from a water tank 19, which is [delivered] through a
29 hydrogen line 17 via a pressure reducing valve 14 to a metering and shutoff
30 valve 15 and, from there, is added to the untreated exhaust gas at a point 6
31 and/or to the exhaust gas treated by an oxidation catalytic converter 3 at a point

7 in an exhaust-gas line 2 leading away from an internal combustion engine 1.

The arrow A indicates the direction of flow of the exhaust gas. An NO_x storage catalytic converter 4 is located in the exhaust-gas line 2, downstream of the oxidation catalytic converter 3.

The H₂ gas produced by the hydrolysis unit 10 can either be produced on demand in the quantity required at the moment, or a hydrogen tank 11 can be connected between the hydrolysis unit 10 and the pressure reducing valve 14, from which a condensate return line RK leads to the water tank 19 via a shutoff valve 16. A pressure sensor 13 is connected to the hydrogen tank 11 that serves to provide intermediate storage. In addition, a safety valve 12 is attached to the hydrogen tank 11. If necessary, the hydrogen tank 11 can also be represented by the inner lumen of the H₂ line 17.

The metering and shutoff valve can be designed so that the hydrogen flowing to the point 5, i.e., the portion of hydrogen added to the untreated exhaust gas and the portion of hydrogen added to the exhaust gas after the oxidation catalytic converter 3 (at point 7), can be metered separately if necessary.

Figure 1 further shows that a control/regulating unit 18 comprises an interface that is connected to the hydrolysis unit 10, the pressure sensor 13 of the hydrogen tank 11, the metering and shutoff valve 15, the shutoff valve 16 and to a temperature sensor 5 measuring the exhaust-gas temperature T_A . The control/regulating unit 18 is designed to control and regulate the production of hydrogen in the hydrolysis unit 10 and the metering device 15 as a function of certain operating states of the internal combustion engine 1 and as a function of registered parameters—including the exhaust-gas temperature T_A —of the exhaust-gas system.

When the internal combustion engine 1 outfitted with the apparatus for the post-treatment of exhaust gas is a direct-injection gasoline engine, for example, the method according to the invention can be applied in various fashions:

1. H_2 is added to the untreated exhaust gas (at point 6) to represent the regeneration phases when an NOx storage catalytic converter 4 is employed (at intervals of approximately 1 x per minute) if the engine operating point at the moment does not allow HC to be made available using internal processes at a sufficient temperature. The control of the regeneration process by means of the control/regulating unit 18 takes place analogous to NOx catalytic converter control employed in gasoline direct-injection engines.

2. A sufficient rate of conversion is restored after sulphur poisoning occurs at the oxidation stages of the NOx storage catalytic converter 4. This is required, after a few hours of operation, for example, depending on the sulphur content of the fuel. The control of the regeneration process by means of the control/regulating unit 18 takes place after a decrease in the conversion rate is registered. The control/regulating unit 18, which is connected to an appropriate catalytic converter sensor system, comprises a catalytic converter monitoring function for this purpose.

Figure 2 presents a second exemplary embodiment, in which the method according to the invention is employed in a motor vehicle engine, e.g., a diesel engine with direct injection, outfitted with a CRT particle filter for the post-treatment of exhaust gas. A particle filter 8 of this type, as shown in Figure 2, is located in the exhaust pipe 2 of the direct-injection diesel engine 1. An oxidation catalytic converter 3 is installed upstream of the CRT particle filter 8. The hydrogen produced by the hydrolysis unit 10 and metered in an appropriate quantity by the metering and shutoff valve 15 is added at point 6 to the untreated exhaust gas that flows through the exhaust pipe 2 (arrow A). All other structural

1 details of the apparatus shown in Figure 2 are of the same type as shown
2 hereinabove in Figure 1.

3
4 A distinction is made between numerous applications here as well:

5
6 1. With a diesel engine, H_2 is added to the untreated exhaust gas to
7 represent the regeneration phases of the particle filter 8 if HC cannot be
8 generated using internal processes. The regeneration process is controlled
9 analogously to the NOx catalytic converter control employed in gasoline direct
10 injection engines.

11
12 2. With diesel engines, a sufficient rate of conversion can be restored after
13 sulphur poisoning of the particle filter 8 occurs by employing the method
14 according to the invention. This is necessary, e.g., after a few hours of operation,
15 depending on the sulphur content of the fuel. Control of the regeneration of the
16 particle filter 8 can begin after a decrease in the conversion rate is registered. A
17 catalytic converter monitoring function is integrated in the control/regulating unit
18 18 for this purpose.

19
20 3. The exhaust-gas temperature can be raised by introducing hydrogen
21 according to the invention to guarantee the regeneration conditions are met when
22 the particle filter 8 is employed when the engine operates under low-load
23 conditions, and temperature is therefore a crucial factor.

24
25 The H_2 tank 11 is provided only as an option in Figure 2 as well. Instead of this,
26 an H_2 pipe with a sufficient inner lumen can replace the H_2 tank 11 which serves
27 to provide intermediate storage.

28
29 Taken together, the method according to the invention for the post-treatment of
30 exhaust gas produced by an internal combustion engine, especially in a motor
31 vehicle, serves to raise the temperature of the exhaust gas and the catalytic

1 converter, which is necessary in particular when the engine is cold and when it
2 operates under low-load conditions. Furthermore, hydrogen can be produced
3 “on-board” and during transient operation using the method according to the
4 invention and added to the catalytic converter or the particle filter via the
5 metering and shutoff valve 15 as needed and depending on the specific case at
6 hand. In contrast to generation of HC using internal processes, which requires
7 the presence of a common rail injection system, the quality of the exhaust
8 gas—and the rate of particulate emissions in particular—and the engine
9 acoustics are not made even worse. In addition, the response behavior of the
10 systems is much faster when hydrogen is added.

11

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What is claimed is:

1. A method for the post-treatment of exhaust gas produced by an internal combustion engine (1), particularly in a motor vehicle, wherein
 - a hydrolysis unit (10) connected to a water tank (19) is provided to obtain hydrogen, and
 - a quantity of hydrogen depending on a demand for hydrogen occurring at certain operating states and/or functions of the catalytic converter delivered to the untreated exhaust gas (A) and/or the exhaust gas treated by an oxidation catalytic converter is metered.
2. The method according to Claim 1, wherein the quantity of hydrogen required in each case is produced on demand in the hydrolysis unit (10) and made available directly for metering.
3. The method according to Claim 1, wherein a hydrogen tank (11) is provided that stores a certain quantity of the hydrogen produced by the hydrolysis unit (10).
4. The method according to Claim 3, wherein the quantity of hydrogen in the tank (11) is dimensioned so that it suffices to heat and regenerate an NO_x storage catalytic converter (4).
5. The method according to one of the preceding claims, wherein the temperature (T_A) of the untreated exhaust gas (A) and certain operating states of the catalytic converter system (3, 4) are registered.
6. An application of the method according to one of the Claims 1 through 5 to represent regeneration phases in an NO_x storage catalytic converter, wherein hydrogen is added to the untreated exhaust gas at certain intervals and in the quantity required in each case.

1 7. The application according to Claim 6,

2 wherein, with a diesel engine, the addition of hydrogen to the exhaust gas is
3 activated when hydrocarbon cannot be produced using an internal process.

5 8. The application according to Claim 6,

6 wherein, with a gasoline engine, the addition of hydrogen to the exhaust gas is
7 initiated when the engine operating point at the moment does not allow
8 hydrocarbon to be made available using internal processes at a sufficient
9 temperature.

11 9. The application of the method according to one of the Claims 1 through 5
12 to restore a sufficient conversion rate after sulphur poisoning at the oxidation
13 stages of an NOx storage catalytic converter (4) or a particle filter (8) by
14 regenerating the oxidation stages of the storage catalytic converter (4) or the
15 particle filter (8) by means of hydrogen reduction.

17 10. The application according to Claim 9,

18 wherein regeneration is activated after the decrease in the conversion rate of the
19 NOx storage catalytic converter (4) or the particle filter (8) is registered.

21 11. The application of the method according to one of the Claims 1 through 5
22 to raise the exhaust-gas temperature (T_A) in order to guarantee the regeneration
23 conditions are met when a particle filter (8) is employed while the engine
24 operates under low-load conditions and temperature is therefore a crucial factor.

26 12. An apparatus for the post-treatment of exhaust gas produced by an
27 internal combustion engine (1), particularly in an internal combustion engine,
28 wherein the following are provided: a hydrolysis unit (10) and a metering device
29 (15) connected to it via a hydrogen line (17) for the metered addition of hydrogen
30 to the untreated exhaust gas (A) and/or to the exhaust gas treated using an
31 oxidation catalytic converter (3), and a control/regulating unit (18) that is

1 functionally connected to the hydrolysis unit (10) and the metering device (15) in
2 order to control or regulate the production of hydrogen in the hydrolysis unit (10)
3 and the metering device (15) as a function of certain operating states of the
4 internal combustion engine (1) and registered parameters of the exhaust-gas
5 system.

6
7 13. The apparatus according to Claim 12,
8 wherein the metering device (15) is a metering and shutoff valve.

9
10 14. The apparatus according to Claim 12 or 13,
11 wherein a hydrogen intermediate storage tank (11) is connected downstream of
12 the hydrolysis unit (10) in order to store a certain quantity of hydrogen.

13
14 15. The apparatus according to one of the Claims 12 through 14,
15 wherein the control/regulating unit (18) comprises a catalytic converter
16 monitoring function that is functionally connected to an exhaust-gas sensor
17 system (5).

Abstract of the Disclosure

The invention relates to a method and an apparatus for the post-treatment of exhaust gas produced by an internal combustion engine (1), in particular in a motor vehicle, wherein the following are provided: a hydrolysis unit (10) and a metering device (15) connected to it via a hydrogen line (17) for the metered addition of hydrogen to the untreated exhaust gas (A) and/or to the exhaust gas treated by means of an oxidation catalytic converter (3), and a control/regulating unit (18) that is functionally connected to the hydrolysis unit (10) and the metering device (15) in order to control or regulate the production of hydrogen in the hydrolysis unit (10) and the metering device (15) as a function of certain operating states of the internal combustion engine (1) and registered parameters of the exhaust-gas system (Figure 1).

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FIG. 1

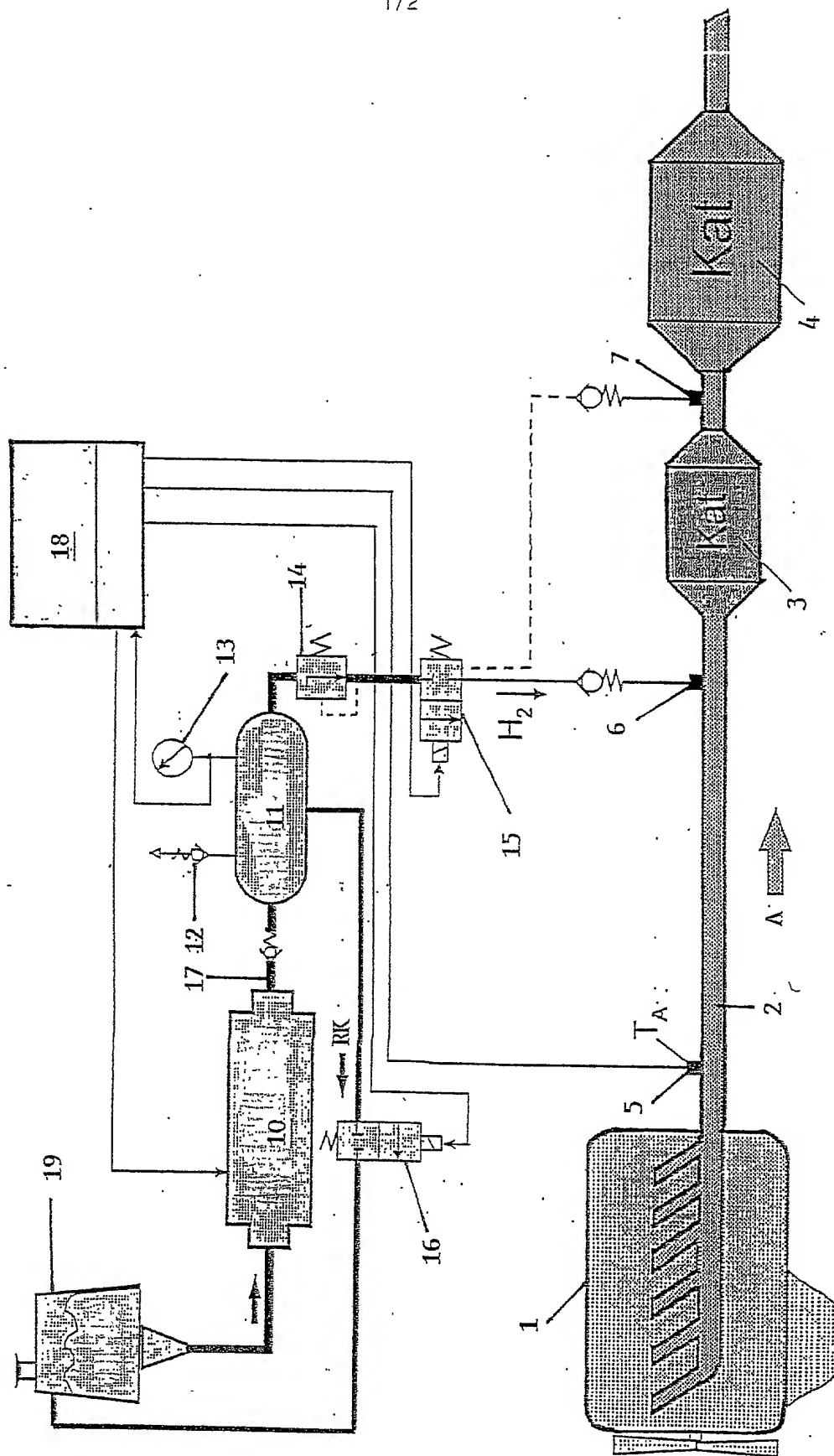
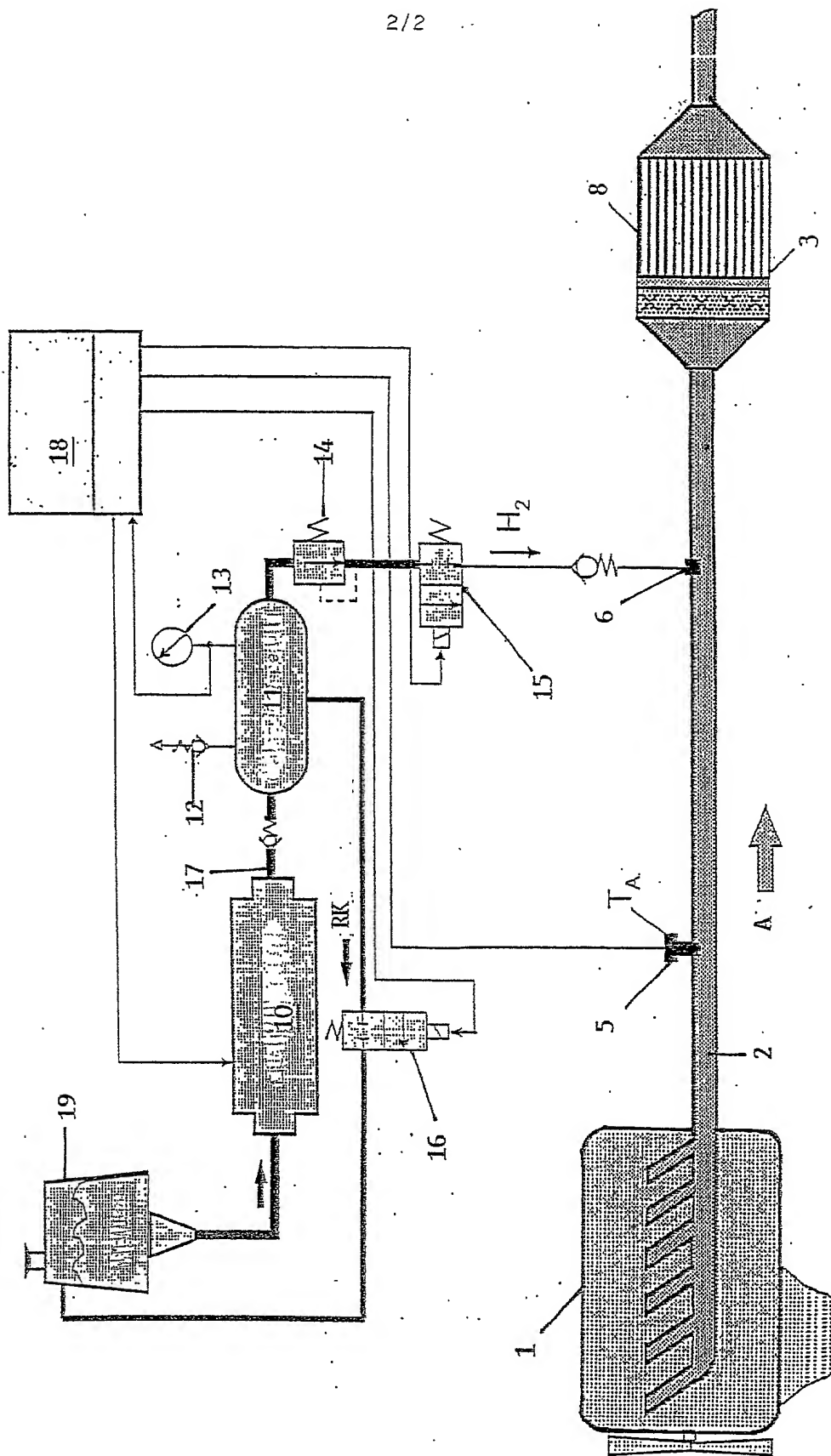


FIG. 2



DECLARATION AND POWER OF ATTORNEY FOR NATIONAL STAGE OF PCT PATENT APPLICATION

As a below-named inventor, I hereby declare that:

Nikolaus BENNINGER
Horst HARNDORF

My residence, post office address and citizenship are as stated below next to my name.

I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only name is listed below) or an original, first and joint inventor (if plural names are listed below) of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled **METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR POST-TREATMENT OF EXHAUST GAS PRODUCED BY AN INTERNAL COMBUSTION ENGINE** the specification of which was filed as PCT International Application number PCT/DE 00/02833 filed on August 18, 2000.

I hereby state that I believe the named inventor or inventors in this Declaration to be the original and first inventor or inventors of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought.

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above-identified specification, including the claims, as amended by any amendment referred to above.

I acknowledge the duty to disclose all information which is material to the patentability of this application in accordance with Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 1.56.

I hereby claim foreign priority benefits under Title 35, United States Code, Section 119(a)-(d) or Section 365 (b) of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate, or Section 365(a) of any PCT International application which designated at least one country other than the United States, listed below and have also identified below, by checking the box, any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate or PCT International application having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed.

Prior foreign application(s):

Priority claimed:

<u>199 39 807.0</u>	<u>GERMANY</u>	<u>AUGUST 21, 1999</u>	<u>X</u>	
(Number)	(Country)	(Date filed)	Yes	No
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
(Number)	(Country)	(Date filed)	Yes	No

As a named inventor, I hereby appoint the following attorney to prosecute this application and to transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected therewith:

Michael J. Striker, Reg. No. 27233

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I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that wilful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such wilful false statement

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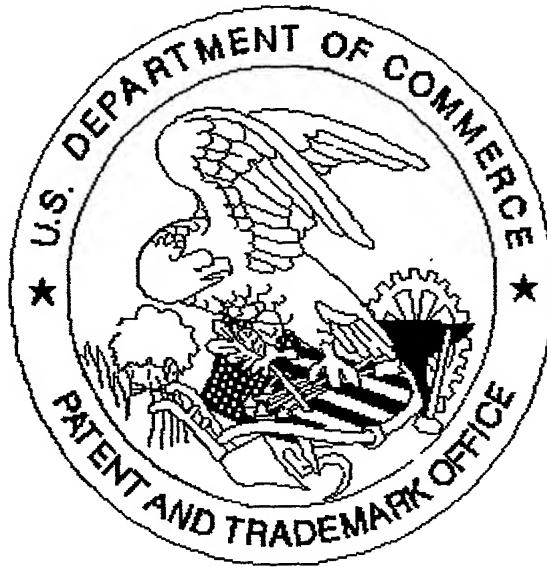
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Full Name of Eighth Inventor:	Citizenship:	
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